

NIH Undergraduate Scholarship Program for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds

Thank you for your interest in the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Undergraduate Scholarship Program (UGSP) for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds.

The UGSP offers scholarship awards to students from disadvantaged backgrounds who are committed to careers in biomedical, behavioral and social science health-related research.

The NIH is one of the world's foremost centers for biomedical research and research training and is part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The UGSP is administered by the Office of Loan Repayment and Scholarship, Office of Intramural Research, Office of the Director, NIH.

This folder contains an application packet for the 2006–2007 academic year which starts in September 2006. The deadline for receipt of complete applications is February 28, 2006. Please review the information in this folder, following the instructions carefully. Prepaid return envelopes have been provided for your convenience.

For those with access to the Internet, our site at <http://ugsp.info.nih.gov> should be consulted as many of your questions will likely be answered after a thorough review of its contents. You may direct your questions to our toll-free help line at 888-352-3001, by fax at 301-480-3123, or by e-mail at ugsp@nih.gov.

Best wishes in your academic pursuits.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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NIH Undergraduate Scholarship Program for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds

INFORMATION AT A GLANCE

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Undergraduate Scholarship Program offers scholarship awards to students from disadvantaged backgrounds who are committed to careers in biomedical, behavioral and social science health-related research. The program is sponsored by the NIH, one of the world's foremost centers for biomedical research and research training.

The scholarships pay for tuition and reasonable educational and living expenses up to \$20,000 per academic year. In return, recipients are obligated to serve as paid employees in NIH research laboratories during the summer and after graduation. In addition to financial assistance, the scholarship program offers invaluable training and mentoring, as well as practical experience in a state-of-the-art research setting.

Why are these scholarships offered?

The goal of the NIH Undergraduate Scholarship Program is to help students from disadvantaged backgrounds pursue educational and career opportunities in biomedical, behavioral and social science health-related research. The NIH is committed to training and nurturing new researchers and to alerting students to career possibilities in the field of biomedical research. This program focuses on individuals who may have had fewer opportunities than others to pursue research careers.

Biomedical research and the National Institutes of Health

The National Institutes of Health is the world's largest biomedical research institution and is the lead Federal agency responsible for basic and clinical research. The NIH has more than 1,000 laboratories on its 306-acre campus in Bethesda, Maryland—a suburb of Washington, DC. The NIH is staffed by more than 18,000 people, including nearly 4,000 researchers and health professionals with doctoral degrees. The NIH is also home to the Warren Grant Magnuson Clinical Center and the Mark O. Hatfield Clinical Research Center, which contain nearly half of all research hospital beds in the United States.

The NIH mission is to uncover new knowledge that will lead to better health for everyone. The NIH works toward that mission by conducting research in its own laboratories; supporting the research of non-Federal scientists in universities, medical schools, hospitals, and research institutions throughout the country and abroad; helping to train research investigators; and fostering the communication of biomedical information.

What are the benefits?

The NIH Undergraduate Scholarship Program can award each student up to \$20,000 per academic year. This can be used for tuition, educational expenses such as books and laboratory fees, and reasonable living expenses. The scholarships are awarded for 1 year and may be renewed (no more than 4 years of scholarship support total). Actual award amounts are finalized between the UGSP and the financial aid office of each participant, after a review of financial need and all available aid. Your scholarship award cannot exceed your unmet college expenses. You should also contact your financial aid office to determine how an outside scholarship will affect your financial aid package. Students are required to file an

application for Federal aid by submitting a Free Application For Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Applications can be accessed at <http://www.ed.gov>.

And the obligations?

Although the Undergraduate Scholarship Program carries service obligations to the NIH, the obligations themselves can be considered benefits—providing students with valuable research experience.

10-week summer laboratory experience.

After each year of the scholarship, each student is required to work for 10 weeks as a paid employee in an NIH research laboratory. This employment occurs during the summer after the receipt of the UGSP award. This service will be an opportunity for scholars to gain critical skills by working with experienced NIH researchers. Each scholar will be matched to an NIH researcher, who will serve as a mentor. Students will also attend formal seminars and participate in a variety of educational programs.

Employment at the NIH after graduation.

After graduation, scholarship recipients are required to serve as full-time employees in an NIH research laboratory. The obligation is 1 year (52 weeks) of full-time employment for each year of scholarship. *Students may defer service obligations for appropriate graduate or medical studies.*

Am I eligible?

The Undergraduate Scholarships are awarded on a competitive basis to students who show a commitment to pursuing a career in biomedical, behavioral or social science health-related research at the NIH.

The basic qualification requirements are as follows:

1. Have a grade point average of 3.5 (on a 4.0 scale) or be within the top 5 percent of your class.
2. Be from a disadvantaged background.*
3. Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a full-time student for the 2006–2007 academic year at an accredited, 4-year undergraduate institution.
4. Be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or qualified non-citizen of the United States. (See page 4 for more information.)

**Disadvantaged background* means that you come from a low-income family, as defined on page 5.

When are applications due?

Complete applications must be received by the NIH Undergraduate Scholarship Program Office by **February 28, 2006**. Applications should be mailed to:

National Institutes of Health
Office of Loan Repayment and Scholarship
2 Center Drive, Room 2E24 (MSC 0230)
Bethesda, Maryland 20892-0230

or can be completed online at:
<http://ugsp.info.nih.gov>

When will awards be made?

The NIH expects to award up to 15 scholarships by mid-July 2006.

NIH Undergraduate Scholarship Program for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds

APPLYING FOR A SCHOLARSHIP

Qualification requirements

The following are the qualification requirements for the program.

Citizenship. Because UGSP participants are employees of the NIH during their training at the NIH, you must qualify for Federal employment. This includes certain citizenship requirements.

You must be a U.S. citizen, a U.S. national, or a qualified non-citizen. (Note that some permanent residents are qualified non-citizens. See below.)

A U.S. national is a person who, although not a citizen of the United States, owes permanent allegiance to the United States. They are generally persons born in outlying possessions of the United States.

If you are a non-U.S. citizen, a) you must be eligible to work in the United States, *and* b) you must qualify for Federal employment.

a) Non-citizens may work in the United States only if they are 1) assigned by the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS) to a class of immigrants authorized to be employed (permanent residents, for example), or 2) expressly authorized by the BCIS to be employed. (Because your employment at NIH will take place in the future, your employment eligibility must be based on a permanent status, such as permanent residency. Individuals authorized to work in the United States on a temporary basis do not qualify.)

b) In general non-citizens, even if they are eligible to work in the United States, cannot be hired as Federal employees; however, there are exceptions to this rule. For example, if you are a U.S. permanent resident from a country allied with the United States in a defense effort, you are eligible for Federal employment.

For a list of countries allied with the United States in a defense effort and for a complete list of exceptions to this rule visit <http://ugsp.info.nih.gov/citizenship.htm>. This site also contains additional information on all of the citizenship requirements.

If you are not a U.S. citizen or national, we recommend that you contact the UGSP before applying to determine if you meet the citizenship requirements.

If you become a UGSP finalist, you will be required to document your citizenship status.

Enrollment in an undergraduate institution.

At the time of application, you must be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a full-time student for the 2006–2007 academic year at an accredited, 4-year undergraduate institution. The institution must be accredited by an agency recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). The institution must also be located in one of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Territory of the Pacific Islands (the Republic of Palau), the Republic of the Marshall Islands, or the Federated States of Micronesia.

The UGSP is not intended for students who already hold a bachelor's or other post-secondary degree.

Academic status. To apply, you must have a grade point average of at least 3.5 (on a 4.0 scale) or be ranked within the top 5 percent of your class.

Disadvantaged background. To be eligible, you must be from a disadvantaged background. This means that your undergraduate institution has certified you as having “exceptional financial need” (EFN), as defined by the Federal Government.

The table on this page lists the latest low-income thresholds used by the Federal Government and published in the *Federal Register*. If your family income for the most recent calendar year is less than that shown for your family size, you qualify as having exceptional financial need. If you qualify, but have not yet been certified by your school, please consult with your financial aid officer.

Additional requirements

The following requirements also apply to applicants.

- You must be eligible for Federal employment.
- You must have no conflicting service obligations.
- You must be free of Federal judgment liens.
- You must be free of delinquent Federal loans.

Further information on each of these is presented in the *Fine Print* section on pages 19–20.

Filling out the forms

This application is available online at:
<http://ugsp.info.nih.gov>.

Application forms for the 2006–2007 scholarship program are also enclosed with this packet. There are four separate forms:

- Application checklist
- Applicant information form
- Undergraduate institution certification form
- Applicant recommendation forms (3 copies)

Low-Income Levels Approved by Secretary of DHHS to Determine Exceptional Financial Need

Persons in Family (Includes only dependents listed on Federal income tax forms)	Family Income Level (Adjusted gross income, rounded to the nearest \$100)
1	\$18,620
2	24,980
3	31,340
4	37,700
5	44,060
6	50,420
7	56,780
8	63,140

These income levels are updated on an annual basis. At the time of this printing, the 2005 update was not available. When it is published, the 2005 update will be posted on our Web site at <http://ugsp.info.nih.gov/disadvantagedbackground.htm>.

Federal Register, Volume 70, Number 33, February 18, 2005, pp. 8381-8382.

Application checklist. The checklist should serve as a guide to ensure that you have completed all parts of the application. Please enclose a copy of the checklist with your application so that we can use it when we receive forms from your undergraduate institution and your references.

Applicant information form. This form requests basic information such as your address, daytime and evening telephone numbers, and undergraduate institution. More important, it asks you to discuss your commitment to biomedical science and to assess your own abilities. This information—along with the recommendations provided by your references—will play an important role in the evaluation of your application.

You should not discuss your disadvantaged background in response to the questions on the application form.

Transcripts and test scores. An official copy of your school transcript is required as part of your application. If you are currently a college freshman, we require both your college transcript and your high school transcript. If you are a college student who has attended more than one post-secondary institution, you must send a transcript from each institution. If you are currently a high school senior, we recommend that you send a photocopy of your ACT and/or SAT scores.

Undergraduate institution certification form. The undergraduate institution you are attending or are about to attend must complete a certification form as part of your application to the UGSP. You should fill out Section A of this certification form and give it, together with one of the return envelopes, to the financial aid officer at your undergraduate institution. The institution will complete the form and return it directly to the NIH.

If you are not yet enrolled in an undergraduate institution, or if you are transferring to a new school, you should contact the school before submitting the form to explain your situation and ensure that they have the necessary financial information from you.

Applicant recommendation forms. Three recommendations are required as part of your application. You should select three individuals who have direct knowledge of your academic qualities (e.g., science teachers, research or lab supervisors, academic advisors). Please fill out Section A of these forms and give the form, along with an attached return envelope, to each of your recommenders. They should return the form directly to the NIH. Recommenders may also complete the recommendation online. Direct them to <http://ugsp.info.nih.gov/applying.htm>.

Application Deadline

Applications for the 2006–2007 school year must be received by February 28, 2006.

Applicants will be notified of their award status by mid-July 2006.

Evaluation of applications

The NIH expects to award up to 15 scholarships for the academic year 2006–2007. Awards will be made on a competitive basis according to the selection factors and award priorities described below.

Screening for completeness and for meeting basic requirements. NIH UGSP staff will screen each application for completeness and basic eligibility. If your application is incomplete by the deadline or if you do not meet the basic requirements, you will be notified that you are no longer under consideration for the scholarship.

Evaluation process. All qualified applications will be reviewed by an evaluation panel appointed by the NIH.

A critical consideration for ranking the qualifications of applicants will be evidence of the applicant's commitment to a career in biomedical, behavioral or social science health-related research as an employee of the NIH. This commitment will be evaluated, in part, on the following:

- Your academic achievements.
- Recommendations and evaluations of your skills, abilities, and goals.
- Relevant extracurricular activities.
- Other information provided in the applicant information form.

Award priorities. The following priorities will be considered in assessing how the scholarships will be awarded:

First priority. Applicants who have completed at least 2 years of undergraduate course work, including four core science courses, and are classified by their educational institutions as juniors or seniors as of the beginning of the academic year of scholarship. (Core science courses include biology, chemistry, physics, and calculus; others may be considered.)

Second priority. Applicants who have completed four core science courses, as defined above.

Third priority. Applicants who are freshmen or sophomores.

Fourth priority. Applicants who are high school seniors and have been accepted for enrollment as full-time undergraduate students in accredited colleges or universities.

Personal interviews

At the discretion of the NIH UGSP, interviews may be conducted with scholarship finalists in person or by phone. If necessary, these interviews will take place during the summer.

If you are selected for an interview, the interviewers will review your research interests, awards, skills, accomplishments, current projects, and extracurricular activities—especially those related to science. The interviewers will also discuss your understanding of the service obligations and your post-service career plans. In addition, the interviewers may ask other questions raised during the evaluation of your application.

Notification of UGSP Application Award

When you apply to the UGSP, the NIH may contact your school(s) and recommenders to confirm information provided in your application materials. Additionally, if you are accepted as a scholarship recipient, the NIH will send notification of this prestigious national award to your school's financial aid office, your recommenders, your school's president, and your congressional representatives. The notification will indicate that you are a participant in the NIH Undergraduate Scholarship Program for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds.

NIH Undergraduate Scholarship Program for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds

SCHOLARSHIP BENEFITS

NIH Undergraduate Scholarships are awarded for 1-year periods (renewable up to 4 years) and cover tuition and reasonable educational and living expenses up to \$20,000 for each academic year. In return, recipients commit to two types of service obligation for each year of scholarship: (1) 10-week summer service as a paid employee in an NIH research laboratory and (2) after graduation, 1 year of full-time paid employment in an NIH research laboratory. Additional information on the service obligation is presented in the sections entitled *10-Week Summer Laboratory Experience (pages 10–11)* and *Service Obligation after Graduation (pages 12–14)*.

Scholarship benefits

The NIH UGSP will make payments directly to your institution, which will be responsible for administering the funds.

Tuition and fees. The UGSP will pay your institution directly for tuition and fees. If you have already paid your tuition and required fees, you will be reimbursed by the school after payment is received from the UGSP.

Reasonable educational and living expenses. The NIH UGSP will make payments to your school at the beginning of each term or quarter for reasonable educational expenses. These expenses may include required books, laboratory expenses, and graduation fees. The scholarship will not pay for tuition costs unrelated to the degree program, membership dues for student societies or associations, loan processing fees, and similar expenses.

Scholars may also receive a stipend for reasonable living expenses during the academic year. These are based on the school's average of allowable expenses incurred per student within the same class year and major.

Note: The receipt of scholarship funds during the school year does not mean you are employed by the Federal Government or that you participate in any of the benefits available to Federal employees.

Approval of academic program and acceptable performance

The NIH must approve your proposed academic program for the scholarship year, and you must agree not to alter the program without prior approval from the NIH. You must send a copy of your course schedule as soon as it has been set by the school. In addition, you must maintain an acceptable level of academic standing, as determined by your academic institution, in accordance with regulations issued by the NIH. If you delay the submission of your academic program, the release of UGSP funds will also be delayed.

Questions and answers about scholarship benefits

Can I receive benefits from other sources?

Receipt of an NIH scholarship does not automatically mean you cannot receive funds from other sources, as long as the sources do not involve service obligations. However, many student assistance programs are based on financial need and may cover expenses already paid by the scholarship. You should contact your school's financial aid officer to determine how an NIH scholarship may affect other assistance. Usually, the total of all awards cannot exceed your expenses.

Note: Educational benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs (under the G.I. Bill) continue along with scholarship funds, since these benefits were earned by prior active duty in a uniformed service.

Are the benefits taxable? The scholarship is taxable. It is your responsibility to arrange for the payment of any Federal, State, and local taxes that may be owed. Applicants should consult IRS Publication 520 to determine the potential effect of scholarship funds on taxable income.

What if I need additional funds? If tuition, educational, and living expenses exceed \$20,000, the NIH UGSP cannot provide additional funds.

What if I need to repeat courses or take a lighter schedule? *The NIH UGSP will pay tuition for courses taken for the first time only.* However, if a repeated course is taken in addition to a full-time course load and the repeated course does not delay the graduation date, payment of the stipend will continue, but the scholarship will not pay for repeated courses.

What if there are breaks in my course work?

Scholars who have breaks in their course work must submit documentation explaining the circumstances and demonstrating a continued commitment to biomedical research. If scholarship recipients have breaks in their course work extending beyond 1 year, an interview will be required before the NIH can resume scholarship support.

Participants incurring a break in their education must also submit documentation from a school official confirming that they (1) are enrolled as full-time students in courses leading to the degree for which they received scholarship support and (2) are not repeating course work.

What if I delay my graduation? The NIH UGSP will discontinue the payment of all benefits when: (1) the school has approved a scholar's leave of absence for personal or medical reasons or (2) a scholar's graduation is delayed by a requirement to repeat course work or by a change to a decelerated, nontraditional, or part-time program.

You are required to notify the NIH UGSP office in writing when considering a leave of absence, repeat of course work, or a decelerated, nontraditional, or part-time program. You must also forward a letter from your school verifying the changes made in your undergraduate program.

NIH Undergraduate Scholarship Program for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds

10-WEEK SUMMER LABORATORY EXPERIENCE

Two kinds of service obligations (forms of payback) are required from each scholarship recipient. After each scholarship year, you must serve for 10 consecutive weeks (during the summer) as a full-time employee in an NIH research laboratory. In addition, after graduation you must serve 1 year (52 weeks) for each year of scholarship support as a full-time NIH employee. You will be paid at established Federal Government rates for this service. Substantial penalties apply to students who fail to meet their service obligations.

NIH summer laboratory experience

After each year of the scholarship, you will be required to work as an employee in an NIH research laboratory for 10 consecutive weeks. This employment occurs during the summer after the receipt of the UGSP award. This service must take place during the months of June, July, and August, with some flexibility to the actual start date in June, depending upon your academic calendar. Students will normally begin service upon completion of the school year. You must serve 10 consecutive weeks. Adjustments in the ending date may be made by the NIH if the obligation is suspended, interrupted, waived, or otherwise delayed.

Determination of laboratory assignments.

Laboratory assignments will be made by matching your interests and skills with research projects at an NIH laboratory. Normally, scholars will visit the NIH campus in early January to meet potential laboratory mentors and be matched for the summer service period.

If you fail to obtain a placement by the deadlines announced by the NIH UGSP, you will be assigned to a position. The NIH reserves the right to make final decisions on all placements to comply with the statutory requirements for the placement of scholars.

Compensation

For your 10-week service, you will be hired as a Federal Government employee (student trainee) and be paid according to the classification level of the job. Depending on your educational level and experience, you will be eligible for positions in the range of General Service (GS) levels GS-3 to GS-5, which pay approximately \$10 to \$13 per hour. As a UGSP student trainee, you will be eligible for both annual and sick leave and may purchase subsidized health insurance.

Housing. The NIH will make arrangements for you to reside in housing shared by other scholars in the Bethesda, Maryland, area. It is strongly recommended that you use this housing to facilitate access to the NIH laboratories, library, computer facilities, lectures, and symposia. These arrangements also will give you better opportunities to network with other scholars, NIH mentors, graduate students, and NIH post-doctoral trainees.

Transportation. Reasonable costs of transportation to and from your undergraduate institution or permanent residence to the NIH will be covered by the UGSP.

NIH mentors

An important goal of the summer research experience is for you to develop a mentoring relationship with an NIH researcher. The one-on-one mentor relationship is considered critical to your development, both professionally and personally. The mentor will provide support and advice to guide your development as a biomedical researcher. The NIH mentoring experience is designed to motivate and encourage you as you plan a career in biomedical research.

Other activities for the 10-week summer program

Courses. To support your professional development, the following courses are required during the 10-week summer experience:

- Laboratory Safety for Summer Research Associates
- Working Safely with HIV and Other Bloodborne Pathogens in the Research Laboratory
- Radiation Safety
- Ethics for Biomedical Researchers

You will also be required to attend sessions of the UGSP Summer Workshop Series. (A schedule will be provided upon arrival at the NIH.) You should anticipate that the workshop series is academically rigorous and that it requires several hours each week, in addition to the time spent in your lab assignment.

Poster Day. You will be required to participate in the NIH Poster Day. This will be an opportunity for you to present information about your laboratory project. Although results may not be available from your experiments, you will be able to present background information, data, and issues that arose during your research.

Keeping a journal. It is suggested that you keep a journal describing your experience at the NIH. At the beginning of the 10-week period, you will be given guidelines for recording your personal and professional development in the journal.

Visit from undergraduate institution mentor. Your faculty mentor or research advisor from your undergraduate institution may visit the NIH campus once during your 10-week laboratory experience. The visit will offer an opportunity for the faculty mentor to learn about your research project, to assess your progress, and to discuss your experiences with your NIH research mentor. It will also provide an opportunity to integrate your NIH research project with your academic program at your undergraduate institution. This visit usually coincides with the activities of NIH Poster Day.

Evaluations and assessments. At the start of the summer program, you will be given an opportunity to conduct a self-assessment of your skills and to set goals for the 10-week experience in terms of professional and personal development.

In addition, assessment and evaluation measurements may be developed in conjunction with your NIH laboratory mentor. The evaluations are intended to provide you with information on your strengths and areas that need further development.

NIH Undergraduate Scholarship Program for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds

SERVICE OBLIGATION AFTER GRADUATION

As an NIH Undergraduate Scholar, you will incur 1 year (52 weeks) of obligated service at the NIH for each full or partial year of support. The maximum service obligation is 4 years. Scholars are obliged to serve as full-time NIH employees in an NIH research laboratory.

Service obligation

You must begin your service within 60 days of completing the requirements for your undergraduate degree, unless a deferment is granted by the NIH UGSP (see below).

The last day of the service obligation is determined in whole years from the starting date. Adjustments in the ending date may be made by the NIH if the obligation is suspended, interrupted, waived, or otherwise delayed.

Note: The end of your obligated service, of course, does not necessarily mean the end of your employment at the NIH. A primary goal of the program is to attract you to a long-term career at the NIH.

Generally, the NIH UGSP will defer the service obligation to enable you to complete accredited graduate or medical education programs. More information on these deferments is presented below.

Scholars with extreme circumstances that jeopardize the start of service may request the NIH to suspend their service obligations for up to 1 year. Such requests require a detailed written explanation and will be granted only if extreme circumstances have been documented.

Licensure requirement

Scholars who fulfill their service obligation after completion of a medical degree must meet the requirements for licensure and residency training specific to the NIH program for which they are applying. Federal employees who are medical doctors involved in clinical care are required to be licensed. Responsibility for obtaining the required license prior to the service start date rests with the scholars.

Position assignments at the NIH

Scholars must fulfill their service obligation in approved positions at NIH intramural research laboratories. These positions may include placement at NIH facilities in the following locations: Bethesda, Poolesville, Frederick, and Baltimore, Maryland; Research Triangle Park, North Carolina; Hamilton, Montana; and Phoenix, Arizona.

You will be advised about seeking a research position at the NIH. If you fail to obtain a placement in one of the listed vacancies by the deadline announced by the NIH, you will be assigned to a position.

The NIH reserves the right to make final decisions on all placements in satisfaction of its statutory requirements for placement of scholars.

Breach of contract

As explained in the *Fine Print* section on page 20 and in the contract, there are substantial penalties for failing to begin or to complete the service obligations.

Deferments for graduate or medical studies

Scholars will ordinarily begin serving as full-time NIH employees within 60 days after obtaining their undergraduate degrees. Generally, the NIH UGSP will defer the post-graduation service obligation to enable scholars to complete accredited graduate or medical education programs that will lead to careers in biomedical research.

If you elect to enter an accredited graduate or medical school program immediately upon graduation, you will be provided with the policies, procedures and forms for requesting deferments and a *Deferment Request Form* to enable you to inform the NIH UGSP of your graduate study plans.

If you enter post-graduate training that is not approved for deferment, or otherwise fail to comply with the published terms and conditions of deferment, you will be subject to the breach-of-contract provisions described in the *Fine Print* section on page 20 and in the contract.

Conditions of deferment

The following terms and conditions apply to the deferment of obligations:

- You must pursue training that is approved for deferment by the NIH UGSP and that does not incur conflicting service obligations.
- You must complete and return the *Deferment Request Form* or provide equivalent evidence of training by the deadline.
- You must make no change in the type or period of training without prior written approval of the NIH UGSP.

- You must notify the NIH UGSP within 15 days of moving to a new mailing address and of any changes that affect your training status.

Participants who fail to comply with these terms and conditions for deferment will be considered in breach of their contract and subject to the damages provision described in the contract.

Training for which deferments are not granted

Deferment of the service obligation will not be approved for programs that do not lead to graduate or medical degrees that prepare students for careers in biomedical research.

Deferments also cannot be granted for post-graduate medical education conducted or sponsored by a branch of the Armed Forces of the United States. These programs require service obligations that would conflict with the NIH Undergraduate Scholarship service obligation.

Possible placements

The following should give you an idea of the types of placements that are possible for the post-graduation service obligation. Please note that the salary amounts indicated are those currently in effect. These may change by the time of your service.

If you have a bachelor's degree

If you have a B.S. or a B.A. degree, you may be eligible for entry-level or trainee research positions at \$28,000 to \$30,000 as of May 2005, dependent upon academic achievement and experience. Potential positions could include biologist, microbiologist, chemist, or computer specialist.

If you have a doctoral degree

If you have received a deferment and have obtained a doctoral degree (Ph.D. or M.D.), you may be eligible for a post-doctoral fellowship to fulfill the post-graduation service obligation. Post-doctoral training positions, depending upon education and experience, may start at \$38,000 to \$45,000 as of May 2005. These positions are available in two pathways:

Laboratory Research Pathway. You will engage in pure laboratory research. Applicants for this training pathway must have either a graduate doctoral degree (e.g., Ph.D. or M.D./Ph.D.) or a professional degree (e.g., M.D., D.O., D.D.S., D.M.D., Pharm.D., or D.V.M.), accompanied by previous research laboratory experience.

Combined Clinical and Research Pathway. You will receive clinical subspecialty training at the NIH as well as training in clinical and/or basic research. To qualify for this pathway, you must possess a degree in medicine or dentistry. The following programs are available:

- *Clinical Associate Program.* Provides the opportunity for physicians and dentists to participate in clinical and laboratory research with primary patient-care responsibilities. Fellows must have completed 2 to 3 years of post-doctoral medical or dental training. Fellows may be employed by the U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) as commissioned officers or as staff fellows in the civil service.
- *Research Associate Program.* Trains physicians and dentists to conduct laboratory research in the biomedical sciences that does not entail patient-care responsibilities. Applicants must have completed less than 3 years of post-doctoral laboratory research at the time of application (most have had some research experience). Appointments are in the civil service as a staff fellow or as a commissioned officer in the PHS.
- *Staff Fellowship.* Trains individuals with doctoral degrees and no more than 3 years of post-doctoral research experience to conduct biomedical laboratory research.
- *Senior Staff Fellowship.* Trains individuals with doctoral degrees who have completed 3 or more years of laboratory research experience.

Deferring the Service Obligations of NIH Undergraduate Scholarship Program Participants for Approved Undergraduate, Graduate, and Medical Training

DEFERMENT INFORMATION

For each year of scholarship support, you will incur two service obligations to the NIH: (1) a 10-week summer service as a paid employee in an NIH research lab and (2) after graduation, 1 year of full-time paid employment in an NIH research lab.

Your post-graduating service obligation, however, may be deferred until after you complete graduate or medical programs leading to a doctoral degree.

Definitions

A **deferment** is a delay in the start of an NIH UGSP service obligation granted by the UGSP Director. Requests for deferment must be made by the scholar. Deferments may be granted for the academic year and continued for a specified period of time in order for the scholar to enter and complete an approved graduate or medical training program, in accordance with the program's Federal statute and regulations, and the administrative guidelines set forth in this application packet.

An **undergraduate degree program** is an academic program that culminates in a baccalaureate degree (B.A., B.S., or equivalent).

Graduate or medical training is an academic program that culminates in a doctoral degree (such as Ph.D. or M.D.).

Postgraduate training is postgraduate clinical training accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.

Completion of residency is the minimum time period of approved postgraduate clinical training required for a physician to sit for a specialty board's certifying examination(s).

The UGSP Director may grant a **delay in the start of the service obligation**, in intervals of up to 1 year, for reasons other than for approved graduate or medical training. Requests for postponement must be submitted in writing to the UGSP with the required documentation. For more information, see page 16.

General Rules for Deferments

Deferments will not be considered for training conducted by any entity that imposes a service obligation, such as a branch of the Armed Forces of the United States. In addition, deferments will not be considered for graduate training programs which culminate in a master's-level degree: only doctoral-level training (such as Ph.D. and M.D. programs) is eligible for deferment of the UGSP service obligation.

The Terms and Conditions of Deferment

You must:

1. Receive approval of your request for deferment by the UGSP Director.
2. Pursue only the graduate or medical training officially approved for your deferment by the UGSP Director.
3. Submit documentation to the UGSP of your training status in the approved program prior to each year of training. (Submission of an annual Deferment Request Form satisfies this requirement.)
4. Make no changes in your period or type of training without prior written approval from the UGSP Director.
5. Notify the UGSP Director in writing within 30 days of any change of address, intent to terminate training, or similar change.
6. Commence service payback within 60 days of the end of the deferment.

Ending Training to Begin Service

If you decide at any time during your deferment that you want to discontinue your training and begin payback of your service obligation, you should promptly contact the UGSP for guidance. You are cautioned that once you start your NIH UGSP service obligation, you must complete 52 weeks of your obligation before resuming additional training (unless the UGSP grants an exception due to extraordinary circumstances; see below for details).

Postponement of the Service Obligation

Postponement During Undergraduate Attendance

Scholars who do not receive a renewal of their scholarship and remain as full-time students in an approved program of study must submit annual verification of their continued enrollment in an undergraduate degree program.

Medical and Personal Postponements

Postponements may be granted by the UGSP Director in intervals of up to 1 year. The UGSP Director determines if compliance with the obligation is temporarily impossible based on information from you and independent documentation from health professionals treating you that you suffer from a physical or mental disability resulting in your temporary inability to comply with your scholarship service obligation. A postponement may also be granted if you can document any problems of a personal nature such as a physical or mental disability, or terminal illness in your immediate family, which the UGSP Director determines would temporarily render you unable to perform the service obligation you have incurred. “Family member” includes the following relatives of scholars:

- (a) spouse and spouse’s parents;
- (b) children, including adopted children, and their spouses;
- (c) parents;
- (d) brothers and sisters, and their spouses;
- (e) any individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the scholar is the equivalent of a family relationship.

In addition, once a scholar has begun a 52-week period of service, they are expected to complete it without interruption. An exception may be granted in extraordinary circumstances (such as an unavoidable conflict with an approved graduate or medical training program’s start date, which was unknown to the scholar at the beginning of service payback period).

Requests for postponements must be submitted in writing to the UGSP Director.

Failure to Meet the Terms and Conditions of Deferment

You are responsible for having your school submit a signed deferment form verifying enrollment in an approved undergraduate, graduate, or medical training program to the UGSP no later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year. If you fail to submit the form, or fail to comply with the terms and conditions of your deferment, you are subject to the default provisions of the UGSP described in the *Fine Print* section on page 20 and in the contract.

NIH Undergraduate Scholarship Program for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ACADEMIC INSTITUTION

Your academic institution must provide information to be submitted as part of the application. During the scholarship period, the institution will administer funds, provide information to the NIH, provide academic guidance, and provide access to the Internet.

Pre-award information

As part of the application, the academic institution must provide information about the applicant's enrollment, academic, and financial status (i.e., whether the applicant qualifies as having exceptional financial need). The institution must certify tuition expenses and estimate reasonable expenses related to approved course work and reasonable living expenses based on the institution's standards.

Once the award is made, the institution will accept scholarship award payments from the NIH and distribute funds on behalf of the scholar.

Faculty member to serve as mentor and advisor

The undergraduate institution must appoint a faculty member to serve as the scholar's mentor and advisor. This faculty member should be able to respond sensitively to the developmental and educational needs of an individual from a disadvantaged background who is pursuing a career in biomedical research. The faculty mentor's roles include the following:

- Provide curriculum guidance and assist the student in selecting appropriate courses.
- Meet with the scholar at least once a month to assess progress and provide advice about any difficulties that may arise.
- Complete a sequence of evaluations, provided by the NIH, to assess the scholar's progress during the scholarship year.

- Visit the NIH campus (reasonable travel expenses covered by the NIH) during the scholar's 10-week laboratory experience to assess progress and set goals for the coming academic year.

Scholarship supplements

The undergraduate institution will be encouraged to supplement tuition, educational, and living expenses that exceed \$20,000.

Access to the Internet

The undergraduate institution should provide the scholar with access to the Internet and the World Wide Web. This will allow access to biomedical research information as well as information about the UGSP that is posted on the World Wide Web. Internet access and an e-mail account also will facilitate communication with NIH mentors and other scholars. Under exceptional circumstances, undergraduate institutions without Internet access or computer equipment may request assistance from the UGSP to satisfy this requirement.

NIH Undergraduate Scholarship Program for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds

THE FINE PRINT

Before you apply for an NIH Undergraduate Scholarship, you and your parents or guardians should read the enclosed contract and be aware of all the conditions and obligations that apply to the award. This page summarizes the most important issues.

Discrimination prohibited

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C.A. 2000d) states:

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination, under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and its implementing regulations (45 Code of Federal Regulations Part 86) provide that no person in the United States shall, based on his/her sex, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C.A. 794), as amended, provides that no otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States shall, solely by reason of his/her handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

On December 6, 1993, the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) stated:

To foster an atmosphere of continuous improvement in our products and services, we must create an environment that fully utilizes the talents and capabilities of each and every one of us, from all backgrounds.... And to do this, we must strengthen our commitment to a workplace that is free of discrimination... a workplace where no one is denied the opportunity to contribute fully because of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, or sexual orientation.

On January 26, 2005, the NIH Director wrote:

Equal employment opportunity means decisions are made on the basis of merit, without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, disability, or reprisal for engaging in a prior protected activity.

Other requirements

In addition to the application requirements, there are several other requirements that you should consider before making an application.

You must be eligible for Federal employment.

As a scholarship recipient, you will fulfill your service obligation as a salaried employee of the Federal Government at the NIH. Therefore, you must be eligible to hold an appointment for Federal civil service with the NIH. (Prior to

fulfilling your service requirements, you will receive current information about Federal civil service appointment mechanisms and benefits.)

To fulfill the service obligation after graduation, you must have obtained the skills, education, experience, certificates, and licenses necessary to satisfy requirements of the specific NIH position of interest.

You must have no conflicting service obligations. Applicants who are already obligated to a Federal, State, or other entity for professional practice, or for an extended period of service after academic training, are not eligible for UGSP awards. An exception may be made if the obligating entity provides documentation that there is no conflict in fulfilling the service obligation and that the NIH UGSP service obligation will be served first.

Scholarship recipients who subsequently enter into other service obligations, or who otherwise are not immediately available after authorized training deferments to fulfill their scholarship service obligations, or who interrupt NIH UGSP service to satisfy other service, will be subject to the breach-of-contract provisions described below.

Scholarship recipients should not expect to be assigned for service in a State, community, NIH grantee institution, or other entity to which they may already owe an obligation for service. All service obligations will be fulfilled at the NIH.

You must be free of Federal judgment liens. Applicants who have a lien against their property arising from a court judgment entered against them for a debt owed to the United States or arising from a civil or criminal proceeding regarding a debt are not eligible for a scholarship until the judgment lien has been paid in full or otherwise satisfied. A State court judgment relating to a Federal debt will also disqualify an applicant. The *Applicant Information* form includes a statement of certification that the applicant is free of such a judgment lien against his or her property.

You must be free of delinquent Federal loans.

The application also includes a certification that the applicant is not delinquent on repayment of any Federal debt. Delinquent borrowers are not eligible to apply. Delinquency in repaying Federal debts includes, but is not limited to, federally guaranteed or federally sponsored student loans that are more than 31 days past due on a scheduled payment.

Breach of contract: Defaulting on the scholarship obligation

What circumstances can lead to default?

Failure to complete academic training.

Scholarship recipients who are dismissed from school for academic or disciplinary reasons, or who voluntarily terminate academic training before graduation from the educational program for which the scholarship was awarded, will be declared in breach of contract and held liable to the United States for repayment of all scholarship funds paid to them and to the school on their behalf. The amount owed must be paid in full within 3 years from the date of default. No interest will be charged on any part of this debt to the United States within the 3-year period. If payment in full is not made within the 3-year period, interest at the prime rate level on the date of execution of the contract will be assessed thereafter.

Failure to begin or complete the service obligation or meet the terms and conditions of deferment. Scholarship recipients who, for any reason, fail to comply with the terms and conditions of deferment described earlier or fail to begin or complete their service obligations after completion of academic training will be in breach of their contracts. When recipients breach their contracts for these reasons, the United States shall be entitled to recover damages equal to three times the scholarship award plus interest, in accordance with the formula:

$$A = 3\Phi \frac{(t-s)}{t}$$

In which:

- A* is the amount the United States is entitled to recover;
- Φ is the sum of the amounts paid to or on behalf of the participant and the interest on such amounts that would be payable if, at the time the amounts were paid, they were loans bearing interest at the maximum legal prevailing rate, as determined by the Treasurer of the United States;
- t* is the total number of months in the participant's period of obligated service; and
- s* is the number of months of the period of obligated service served by the participant.

The damages that the United States is entitled to recover shall be paid within 1 year of the date of default.

How will delinquent debts be collected?

Litigation. If the debt is not repaid in 1 year or 3 years (as applicable) and subsequent collection efforts are unsuccessful, the case will be referred to the U.S. Department of Justice. All delinquent debts will be reported to commercial credit bureaus and are subject to collection costs.

IRS tax refund offsets and Medicare offset agreements and exclusions. The Public Health Service is authorized by Section 2653 of the Deficit Reduction Act to request the Internal Revenue Service to offset income tax refunds due to delinquent defaulters, crediting the refunds to their UGSP financial debts.

Under what circumstances can there be a waiver or suspension of the service or payment obligation?

Scholarship recipients seeking a waiver or suspension of the service or payment obligation must submit a written request to the UGSP Director. The request must state the underlying circumstances and be supported by documentation.

Suspensions or waivers of the service or payment obligation will be considered and may be granted by the UGSP Director whenever compliance by the individual would be impossible or would involve extreme hardship to the individual, and if enforcement of the service or payment obligation would be against equity and good conscience.

Compliance would be considered *impossible* if the UGSP Director determined that the participant suffered from a physical or mental disability resulting in the total and permanent inability of the recipient to perform the service or other activities that would be necessary to comply with the obligation. To determine whether the performance of the obligation would impose an undue hardship and be against equity and good conscience, the UGSP Director will consider:

1. The recipient's present financial resources and obligations.
2. The recipient's estimated future financial resources and obligations.
3. The extent to which the recipient has problems of a personal nature, such as physical or mental disability, or terminal illness in the immediate family, which so intrude on the recipient's present and future ability to perform as to raise a presumption that the individual will be unable to perform the obligation incurred.

All obligations are canceled in the event of a scholarship recipient's death.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH (NIH) LOAN REPAYMENT AND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

PRIVACY ACT NOTICE

The Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a) requires that a Federal agency provide the following notification to each individual whom it asks to supply information. This information is contained in the System of Records of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) numbered 09-25-0165, entitled National Institutes of Health Office of Loan Repayment and Scholarship (OLRS) Records System, HHS/NIH/OD. An update of this system of records was published in the Federal Register on February 8, 2002 (67 Fed. Reg. 6043).

- The authority for collection of the requested information is contained in Sections 487A-F and Section 485G of the PHS Act (42USC288-1,2,3,4,5,5a,6; and 42USC287c-33), and Public Laws 100-607, 101-597, 103-43, 106-310, 106-505, 106-525, and 106-554. The Internal Revenue Code at 26 USC 6109 requires the provision of the Social Security number (SSN) for the receipt of funds.
- The principal purposes of information that you, the applicant or participant, furnish are (1) to determine your eligibility for loan repayment or scholarship under Sections 487A-F and Section 485G of the PHS Act, including verification of the existence and purpose of your educational loan(s), and determination of the amount(s) that are eligible for repayment under the NIH Loan Repayment and Scholarship Programs (LRSPs); and (2) to negotiate and verify the transfer of loan repayments, scholarship awards, and tax reimbursements to participants and to the Department of the Treasury (Treasury), Internal Revenue Service (IRS).
- The principal purposes of information that you, the lender, furnish are (1) to determine an individual applicant or participant's eligibility for loan repayment under Sections 487A-C, E and F, and Section 485G, of the PHS Act, including verification of the existence and purpose of an individual's educational loan(s), determination of the amount(s) that are eligible for payment under the NIH LRSPs; and (2) to negotiate and verify the transfer of a loan repayment to a participant's loan account.
- The principal purposes of the information that you, the undergraduate institution, furnish are (1) to determine an individual applicant or participant's eligibility for scholarship award under Section 487D of the PHS Act, including verification of the amounts of tuition and qualifying educational expenses, including room and board; and (2) to determine an applicant's disadvantaged background status.
- While disclosure of the information is not mandatory, you must provide the information requested to obtain loan repayment and scholarship benefits authorized by Sections 487A-F and Section 485G of the PHS Act.
- The information you provide will be made available to Federal employees responsible for administering the NIH LRSPs to determine your eligibility for loan repayment and scholarship awards, as described above.
- The information you provide will not be disclosed without your consent to anyone outside of DHHS in a manner that identifies you, except as permitted by the Privacy Act.

(See Routine Uses 1-17 for Additional Disclosures.)

- Certifying on NIH 2674-1, “Applicant Information,” authorizes the disclosure of information that confirms you are not under a service obligation, certifying on NIH 2674-4, “Loan Information,” authorizes the disclosure of information to the lenders and their authorized collection agents to confirm that your loans are current in their repayment status, and certifying on NIH 2674-10, “Institutional Information,” authorizes the disclosure of information to the extramural research institutions and their authorized officials to confirm that you are eligible for the loan repayment program and able to fulfill the two-year service obligation.
- Certifying on NIH 2762-1, “Undergraduate Scholarship Applicant Information,” NIH 2762-2, “Applicant Information: Recommendation,” and NIH 2762-3, “Undergraduate Institution Certification,” authorizes the disclosure of information to the undergraduate institution to determine your eligibility for participation in the Undergraduate Scholarship Program, to confirm your eligibility for disadvantaged background status and non-delinquent loan status, and to disclose your educational expenses.

Provision of Your Social Security Number Under Public Law 93-579, Section 7(b), Privacy Act of 1974

- Provision of your SSN is required for participation of the LRSPs. This provision is required, as provided in the Internal Revenue Code 26 USC 6109.
- Provision of your SSN is needed to verify the financial information provided in your application. Your SSN will be given to the Treasury to disburse Federal funds in connection with the program benefit. Your SSN will be used for identification with the records of the Treasury and DHHS in the event of the loss or theft of repayment checks or scholarship awards or other difficulties arising from this transaction. Your SSN will be given to consumer

reporting agencies to obtain a commercial credit report that verifies your ability to repay debts owed to the Federal Government.

- Your SSN will be disclosed to the IRS when making loan repayments or scholarship awards and tax reimbursement payments to the IRS for the benefits you receive under the LRSPs. Your SSN will be disclosed to the IRS to obtain a current mailing address if you default on your service obligation, and to other Federal agencies, commercial credit bureaus, or collection agencies to offset or collect delinquent debts.

Routine Uses as Permitted by the Privacy Act

Disclosure of information may be made to:

1. A Congressional office in response to a written request by the applicant or participant concerning his or her record;
2. The Department of Justice or to a court in the event of litigation;
3. The appropriate agency, whether Federal, foreign, State, local, or tribal, in the event that a system of records indicates a violation or potential violation of law;
4. DHHS contractors for the purpose of processing or refining records, and/or for the purpose of evaluating the programs covered by the system;
5. Private parties such as present and former employers, references listed on application and associated forms, other references, and educational institutions to determine if an applicant is suitable for participation in the NIH LRSPs;
6. A consumer reporting agency (credit bureau) to obtain a commercial credit report to establish an individual’s creditworthiness; to assess and verify his or her ability to repay debts owed to the Federal Government; and to determine and verify the eligibility of loans submitted for repayment;

7. Another Federal agency so that the agency can effect a salary offset for debts owed by Federal employees, or so that the agency can effect an authorized administrative offset; or to the IRS to request an individual's current mailing address to locate him or her to collect or compromise debt, or to have a commercial credit report prepared;
8. Another agency that has asked DHHS to effect a salary or administrative offset to help collect a debt owed to the United States;
9. The IRS to find out whether the applicant has a delinquent tax account;
10. The IRS to report as taxable income the written-off portion of a debt owed by an individual to the Federal Government when a debt becomes partly or wholly uncollectible;
11. Debt collection agents, other Federal agencies, and other third parties who are authorized to collect Federal debts and information necessary to identify a delinquent debtor or defaulting participant;
12. Any third party that may have information about a delinquent debtor's or defaulting participant's current address;
13. Other Federal agencies that also provide loan repayment or scholarship at the request of these Federal agencies in conjunction with a matching program conducted by these agencies to detect or curtail fraud and abuse in Federal loan repayment and scholarship programs, and to collect delinquent loans or benefit payments owed to the Federal Government;
14. The IRS to offset any income tax refunds that may be due to the individual against the debt;
15. Other Federal agencies, debt collection agents, and other third parties who are authorized to collect a Federal debt to identify an individual who is delinquent in loan benefit payments owed to the Federal Government and the nature of the debt;
16. Officials or representatives of grantee institutions in connection with the review of a Loan Repayment Program (LRP) application or performance or administration under the terms and conditions of the LRP award; or in connection with problems that might arise in performance or administration of the LRP contract.
17. Designated school coordinators to determine scholarship support, to inform recipients about their service obligations to NIH, and to verify service deferments for certain Undergraduate Scholarship Program participants; and
18. DHHS contractors to recruit, screen, and match health professionals for NIH employment in qualified research positions; and to references, medical licensing boards, and NIH officials to evaluate the applicant's professional qualifications, experience, and suitability.